

*Adjournment Debate*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Guay).

**Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to hear the hon. member for Lethbridge (Mr. Hurlburt) mention some of the things—

**Mr. Hurlburt:** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order. The hon. member should know there is no point of order.

**Mr. Hurlburt:** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I noticed that we had gone three minutes past the hour when I rose to speak.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Boulanger):** Order. The point of order can be raised tomorrow, but the Clerk has given notice of the time to the Chair.

**Mr. Guay (St. Boniface):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to hear the hon. member for Lethbridge mention some of the actions taken by the federal government in his area, particularly in Lethbridge and the surrounding area. These are some of the benefits; but there are many more which I could mention if I had time. However, speaking on the question proper, the Laborde Simat report, which was prepared for the industrial development department of the city of Lethbridge, reached the ministry on July 13. It is under study within the ministry and further discussions will undoubtedly take place between city officials and the regional administrator for air in Edmonton, and possibly with headquarters officers here in Ottawa.

The city's interest in improving all facilities at Lethbridge is appreciated, and a cordial and effective communication relationship exists at both the regional and the headquarters' levels of the ministry with the city. Already there has been considerable progress in arrangements affecting future development of the commercial area of Lethbridge airport and the ministry is discussing with the city improvements to the terminal as a result of the city being selected as host for the 1975 Canada winter games.

I can only say that at the moment the ministry has not made plans for the runway extension proposed. Should economic studies and forecasts support such an action, we would proceed consistent with national priorities and available funds in future years.

GRAIN—PROVISION OF CARS BY RAILWAYS TO  
TRANSPORT WHEAT

**Mr. Bill Knight (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, in the prairie region, and in respect of western grain producers, one of the most elementary things in supplying them with stability of income is the continuity of the export of their grain into international markets. This fall, the problem in terms of the transportation of that grain has been the most serious it has been for decades. Last January I raised the matter of boxcars for the movement of wheat. That was almost ten months ago. Now we are in exactly the same position; in fact, we are in a worse position.

What are some of the facts outlining that position as of today? Ten years ago, cars suitable for grain movement and similar commodities numbered 88,000. Today, the number of cars suitable for the movement of grain and similar commodities, such as lumber, is 48,000. We have, in a decade, a drop of 40,000 cars which are capable of moving grain. At the port of Vancouver, one of the most important terminal delivery points for the export market, there are between 400 and 500 cars a day for the movement of grain. That is operating at 50 per cent capacity. In terms of employment, at this terminal at least 50 per cent of the men are laid off.

There are ten ships presently loading, and there are at least seven more waiting. At Thunder Bay, which has the capacity to handle 60 million bushels, we have 30 million bushels on hand. Some people might say we have 41 million bushels on hand, but actually we have in fact 11 million bushels of screenings and other commodities not related to the export market.

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In the country elevator system we have stocks on hand to the point where the Saskatchewan elevator system is 73 per cent full, which means that hundreds of country elevators across Saskatchewan are entirely plugged. The CN is 1,500 cars a week ahead of the CPR in the movement of grain; and for that I commend the CN. But what is happening is that the CN and the CP are using the present situation and the strike which took place months ago as an excuse to blackmail this government into supplying them with more hopper cars, as they did before.

What the government must do is to move in the direction of taking over the CPR and developing one national transportation system. One of their immediate actions should be to stop the CPR from scrapping Nos. 22 and 24 grain cars, cars that they are scrapping for metal at the plant in Regina. I understand they have been scrapping hundreds of them. Another thing that the government might attempt to do is establish a national boxcar allocator under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Transport Commission. He would have power to instruct the railways to supply an adequate number of cars as required under the National Transportation Act, in order to move our commodities into position for the export market—and not only the export market but the domestic market, in terms of feed grains for eastern Canada.

Hon. members from Quebec have been complaining that they are not assured of sufficient supplies for the winter. That could be the case because of the problem created by the railways and also the problem created by the minister's feed grain policy in allowing the country elevators to become plugged, instead of using the quota system. I could say more about this but I will argue it some other day. I say to the minister that I am pleased to see he is here to respond to what is an extremely serious situation. We all have to do what we possibly can in the House of Commons to alleviate the situation, and I look forward to hearing his suggestions tonight to try to solve the problem before the dead of winter sets in.

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, there is an old saying that figures do not lie. But certainly it is true that figures can be used in a misleading way. The